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Tactical Technology Office (TTO)
Future Combat Systems

The dramatic images you just witnessed illustrate the diversity, unpredictability, and complexity of the operational environments U.S. and allied armed forces currently face and likely will encounter again in the future. In two words: freedom's peril.

Good morning/afternoon. I'm Colonel Bill Johnson, U.S. Army Program Manager for Objective Force and DARPA Program Manager for Future Combat Systems. I want to share with you an important message of how the Military Services and DARPA are involved in aggressive transformation programs to address the threats of a changing world.

The U.S. Army's transformation program is centered on the creation of what is called the Objective Force. The Objective Force provides warfighting geographic combatant commanders, formerly known as CINCs, with a highly responsive, mobile, and sustained land warfare capability to support operations that range from peacekeeping and humanitarian to large-scale theater warfare. The Army's vision is to field an Objective Force capability this decade . . . a vision we will achieve. The catalyst for achieving this Objective Force capability is the Future Combat Systems Program, called FCS. FCS provides advanced warfighting capabilities to tactical formations called units of action. These brigade-size organizations possess a high degree of strategic, operational, and tactical mobility as well as high degrees of lethality and survivability. We will also achieve a significant reduction in the logistics footprint and the total cost of ownership compared to our legacy and interim forces.

DARPA and the Army have teamed to provide this unprecedented capability, recently bringing on board a lead systems integrator to achieve the Army's vision. This nontraditional partnership has led to the rapid achievement of critical milestones necessary to define, resource, reduce risk, and transition this advanced capability.

FCS-equipped units of action will enable improved situational understanding and allow the Objective Force to see first, understand first, act first, and finish decisively as the means to tactical success. Many of the technologies you will hear about at DARPATech will contribute to this vision.

I want to emphasize our vision of success. It's not a successful demonstration or the production of a new platform. It's when our soldiers, enabled with advanced technologies, are trained, equipped, and ready to accomplish 21st Century operations and survive. Platforms, sensors, and networks are enablers for soldiers to make decisions and execute missions. This force is soldier-centric, network-enabled, and knowledge-empowered.

Let's take a look at how DARPA programs currently envisioned to support the FCS Program can be used in a representative joint operational context.

ROLL VIDEO TAPE

On 15 March this year, DARPA awarded an agreement to the Boeing Company and Science Applications International Corporation to serve as the FCS Lead Systems Integrator, or LSI. This DARPA-Army-industry partnership will employ innovative methods to support the rapid development, acquisition, and fielding of advanced warfighting capabilities this decade. The Government will retain its statutory and regulatory requirements for management and oversight,with the LSI given total systems integration responsibility. We are using the integrated product and process development method to organize and manage the FCS Program with active Government participation in all aspects of the execution of the FCS agreement.

To produce, train, test, field, and support the FCS-equipped unit of action, the LSI will bring on board industry partners to supply and integrate the various FCS systems that you saw earlier.

On 29 March 2002, Boeing released a broad industry announcement for white papers in 44 categories. These categories include manned platform development and integration, advanced warfighter interfaces, and networking technologies. The purpose of this round of BIAs was to select industry partners to help conduct various trades of materiel solutions. More than 2,900 responses were received, with 197 letter contracts being issued to 80 different organizations. This includes 33 large corporations, 21 small businesses, and 26 categorized as “other” such as Government agencies or universities. A second round of BIAs, with the purpose of developing performance specifications for the various systems, will be released this Thursday. To coincide with the release of these BIAs, Boeing is conducting an industry day at the Mariott in Irvine. Information on this second round of BIAs can be found on Boeing's web site, www.Boeing.com/fcs.

Following the development of performance specifications, in January 2003, Boeing will issue multiple requests for proposal for the systems design and development phase of the program, expected to begin in June 2003. In this phase, prototype systems will be developed for live-fire and operational testing, leading to low rate initial production and the fielding of the first unit of action.

However, the FCS Program does not end with the transition of the LSI agreement to the Army in June and the beginning of prototype development. DARPA will continue to provide the technological innovation necessary to support the transformation of our Armed Forces. FCS will adopt a spiral development process that will enable warfighting capabilities to expand and change to keep ahead of adaptive threats and advances in technology. Many of these future capabilities are being developed at DARPA today, but we continue to need your good ideas and I encourage you to share them with us.

Thank you for your attention and I'll be followed by Sam Wilson.